



# BATTLE SIGHT



Issue 003

30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team

15 May 2004



*ICDC Graduation at  
FOB Caldwell*



*B Company, 1st Bn, 120th  
Inf conduct patrols.*

Published twice each month for the Soldiers and families of the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT. Questions or comments concerning this letter can be sent to the PAO Capt. Matthew Handley [matthew.handley@us.army.mil](mailto:matthew.handley@us.army.mil)

If you would like to submit stories or photos for consideration for publication in the Battle Sight, contact Master Sgt. Mike Welsh [michael.welsh@us.army.mil](mailto:michael.welsh@us.army.mil)

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### Public Affairs Guidance for dealing with the media

- Always check to see if the media rep is credentialed. If not credentialed, suggest they contact the 1ID PAO, Maj. Debra Stewart at the DIV HQ.
- Never discuss current or future operations. Topics such as Force Protection and ROE are off limits.
- Everything is on the RECORD when talking with the media.
- Stay in your lane and only discuss what you know and NEVER speculate.
- Be prepared by knowing three things you can say about yourself and three things about your job.
- Avoid using any military jargons. Keep it plain and simple.
- If you do not know the answer, then just say you do not know. NEVER lie to the media.
- Set the record straight if the media has the facts confused.
- Have your chain of command notify the PAO about the interview.

Remember, if we do not tell the story, the media will be forced to write it on their own. We can be proud of what we are doing for OIF and the sacrifices our families are making. Let the world know that you are making a stand and what you are willing to defend.

Cover photograph - Spc. Adam Huneycutt, A Company, 105th Engineers, 30th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), pulls perimeter security with his M249 SAW machine gun during a convoy halt incident to a IED (Improvised Explosive Device) being located by an earlier convoy. The IED was safely destroyed. (photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT, PAO)

## Information Operations in Diyala

Written by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO

Recently members of the Iraqi media in the Diyala region had the opportunity to register officially with the 1ID. Media members meeting the criteria were issued a 1ID PRESS badge and signed the *Media Ground Rules* agreement.

By having recognizable media credentials, Soldiers can accurately identify members of the Iraqi media. This badge is **NOT** a permit for a weapon and it is not an automatic pass for checkpoints. Every badge has the name of the representative and the organization that they represent. Refer to your Public Affairs Guidance for details on how to engage the Media.

This credentialing process establishes a platform that will assist the Task Force in promoting the positive stories about the Coalition in the eyes of the Iraqi media. Additionally, the credentialing process provides an effective way for Information Operation (IO) work groups to conduct media assessment of the Iraqi TV Stations, Newspapers, and Magazine publications as IO looks for ways to release public service announcements.



Capt. Matt Handley, 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team, PAO, screens members of the media applying for media credentials from the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT PAO)



Members of the local media and press attended the Media Round Table sponsored by the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT near FOB Wyatt. The overall response was overwhelming and a foundation for a good relationship was established. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT PAO)

This is the Media Badge issued by the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. This is not a weapon permit for citizens. Holders of this badge still have to go through checkpoints. The intent is to help Soldiers identify who the real media members are.



Iraqi media and news publications are becoming abundant and it is crucial for the Coalition Force to work with the media in promoting the Good News stories about Operation Iraqi Freedom. Without assistance they will resort to printing a one sided news product. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT PAO)





# R&R PASS INFORMATION

**R&R LEAVE**  
**G1 LNO: Anaconda DNVT: 302 520 0106**  
**Wolverine DSN: 318 830 1147**

- Soldiers on 365 day Deployment are eligible to participate
- 15-days chargeable leave to location of Soldier’s choice
- Soldier is transported from unit AO to LSA Anaconda by convoy
- Soldier flies from LSA Anaconda to Kuwait in DCUs w/ IBA & Kevlar
- IBA & Kevlar are stored at Camp Wolverine
- Air travel is free to leave destination
  - Ø Soldier flies direct via commercial air to airport closest to leave destination.
  - Ø SATO at Camp Wolverine issues tickets to final destination
- Soldier remains in travel status until day after arrival at final destination
  - Ø Signed out on leave by G1 LNO at Camp Wolverine
  - Ø Signed in from leave by unit when Soldier returns to unit AO
- Soldier returns to Camp Wolverine and continues to Balad w/IBA & Kevlar
- Soldier is transported by convoy to unit AO

**LAKE DOKAN**

- 4-day pass to a resort hotel in northeast-ern Iraq
- Depart each Wednesday morning & return each Saturday evening
- Free lodging in air-cond. 2-person rooms w/TV, towels, and fridge stocked with 10 bottles of water per person per day
- Free Meals (three per day)
  - Ø Unlimited coffee, tea, and orange juice with breakfast
  - Ø Unlimited coffee & tea with dinner
  - Ø One soda & one water free w/each meal (extra soda or water is \$1.00)
- \$3.00 Haircuts
- Internet café - \$1 for 20 minutes
- Free amenities include:
  - Ø Boating
  - Ø Fishing
  - Ø Swimming Pool
  - Ø Fitness Center
  - Ø Basketball Court
  - Ø TV/Movie Room w/playstation 2
  - Ø Ping Pong & Pool Tables
- Bring Money for Kurdish Vendors! (At least \$100 is recommended)

**QATAR**

**Pass Site NCOIC: DSN: 318 432 4337**  
**G1 LNO: Anaconda DNVT: 302 520 0106**

- 5-day pass at Camp As Sayliyah w/free lodging and meals
- On-Post Amenities:
  - Ø Food court w/Pizza Inn, Burger King, Subway, & Green Bean Coffee Shop
  - Ø BX/PX area w/gift shops, jeweler, photo lab, barber/beauty shops, & laundry svc.
  - Ø Fitness center w/pool, day spa, weight room, tennis courts, basket-ball, volleyball, movie/TV room, game room, internet café, and phones
  - Ø Club Oasis (3 alcoholic drinks a day)
  - Ø Finance – casual pay limit \$350; check cashing limit \$745
  - Ø Post office
- Off-Post Activities w/escort at own expense:
  - Ø Shopping at European style malls
  - Ø Hotel leisure w/pool & beach access, gym, spa, sauna, courts, & hot tub
  - Ø Water sports – banana & tube rides w/power boat, jet-ski rides, water skiing, sea cycles, parasailing, & windsurfing
  - Ø Dhow Cruise featuring Qatari food, and culture; swimming
  - Ø Deep sea fishing – includes tackle, bait, and meal
  - Ø Dune rides

## NCO Azimuth Check

Long deployments are targets for complacency and the NCO continues to be the most effective resource for preventing accidents and maintaining Army standards. When was the last time your team inspected their loaded magazines, actually rehearsed your SOP for something like an IED, or took an inventory of those Combat Lifesaver Bags with alcohol pads that have dried out in the intense heat?

Overall, the NCOs in the Brigade are doing a fantastic job and the bar has been raised by the outstanding results from the collective effort. However, it would not hurt at this point to take some time with your team and discuss some new methods to stay sharp and motivated under some very difficult conditions in the world of FOB life.

Previous units trying to maintain a sharp edge on deployment have offered competitive events such as Ranger stakes, medic competitions, Iron Mike contest, conducted the PLDC courses, participation in Joint Operations with other military units which offered the opportunity to earn a foreign military award. The warrior spirit needs to be maintained.

Send us your suggestions on methods the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT can implement in order keep troops alert and focused for the duration of the mission. We will print these in a future issue of the Battle Sight.

*Battle Sight staff* \_\_\_\_\_



It's no longer a weekend training session as these Soldiers apply their leadership skills during a map recon prior to conducting a combat patrol. Left to right is Staff Sgt Kim Richardson, Sgt First Class Michael Watts, and 2Lt. Brett Wetherilly all with, B Company, 252<sup>nd</sup> Armor Battalion. The 252<sup>nd</sup> is deployed with the 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team (BCT) in Iraq. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)

# A little bit of West Virginia in Iraq

Written by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO

**FOB Roughrider, Iraq** - “I was raised better than to ignore these people” said Staff Sgt. Howard Branham, A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Armor, 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team (BCT), serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom with the Army’s 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division (1ID). The 30<sup>th</sup> BCT is a North Carolina enhanced brigade composed of units from over 10 different states.

“What they need is water, electricity, schools, and good clean water. The majority of the Iraqi people keep asking for schools” said Branham concerning his encounters with the locals. Many of the remote locations lack any formal schools.

Branham and his team from the West Virginia Army National Guard have been conducting assessments of the villages and small towns that populate the sector patrolled by A Company in the Diyala region of Iraq. These are remote areas long neglected by the previous dictatorship and the infrastructure needs are nothing less than tremendous.



Staff Sgt. Howard Branham (right with helmet), A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Armor, talks to members of the Iraqi Border Police about the possibility of Coalition help with installing a pump for a fresh water well that they are looking at. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)

“We have been working mostly with the Iraqi Border Police (IBP)” continued Branham. A Company has been tasked with patrolling the border which is connected to Iran. “Were conducting night patrols, doing some joint training and operations with the IBP” added Branham. The 150<sup>th</sup> has caught smugglers coming into Iraq with every type of contraband imaginable, as well as those that are crossing the border illegally.

Mission profiles for the 150<sup>th</sup> includes interdiction operations, as well as conducting route clearings, looking for IED’s (Improvised Explosive Device) on endless miles of highway and dirt roads.

“Looks like some sort of burned out tank hull” reported Staff Sgt. Edward Johnson, as he peered through the scope on his M-4 carbine. Johnson and his squad dismounted from their Up Armor HMMWV (high mobility multi-use wheeled vehicle) and cautiously worked their way around the perimeter area of an IED that had just been detonated prior to their arrival. In the distance was a berm of earth piled up with what appeared to be an old tank hull. The men of A Company were interested in the civilians moving behind the berm, which turned out to not be connected to the IED incident.

Fortunately, this IED was detonated without any military or civilian injuries. The Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) reported the IED to the Coalition Force and A Company



Members of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) show Coalition Force Soldiers from A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Armor, the location and firing device insurgents used to detonate an IED along a highway in Iraq. Fortunately, the incident did not result in any injuries. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)



was tasked to secure the site. ICDC personnel were instrumental in the entire operation and continue to contribute to the security mission in Iraq.

The Soldiers from A Company are doing all that they can to help the people of Iraq and are trying to coordinate projects in their area that will improve the quality of life for the people.

Perhaps one of the greatest things that makes the Coalition Force unique is that you have men like these from A Company that can conduct effective combat patrols and at the same time demonstrate a compassionate desire to help those in need. “I grew up around coal camps in West Virginia. In my family if you had something, everybody had something” said Branham.



**Sgt. George Wheeler, A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Armor, keeps his eye on his sector with the M-2 50 cal. during a traffic control point setup in the Diyala region of Iraq. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)**



**Sgt. Jeffery Bates, A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Armor, moves up a stair case in a abandoned Iraqi building used to store military ordance. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)**



**Staff Sgt. Edward Johnson, A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Armor, scans the distant berm as the squad clears a roadside area after a IED was detonated. . (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)**

# Iraqis taking the lead for security

Written by Masetr Sgt. Mike Welsh

**FOB Caldwell, Iraq -** Generations of oppression, poverty, and war have been put to rest by these 25 men of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) graduating May 7 from the Train The Trainer Course, conducted by the 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team (BCT).

On their shoulders rest the responsibility of returning to their companies composed of Iraqi men making up the 206<sup>th</sup> ICDC Battalion and providing them the mentoring and training needed to sharpen the edge of a key security tool implemented across Iraq. This program offered by the Coalition Forces provides the ICDC Soldiers the skills required to conduct platoon level training.

“Basically the ICDC is like the Army National Guard in many ways. They are a security and emergency agency for Iraq that is composed of Iraqi’s from all ethnic groups working to counter violence against Iraq” commented Capt. Robert Boyette, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT Coordinator for the 206<sup>th</sup> ICDC. Boyette is a Guardsman from North Carolina and works as a Probation Officer back home. Since arriving in Iraq this past March, he has been working closely with the ICDC daily.

“Each of these ICDC Soldiers takes this training and experience back to their units. The net result means more hands and eyes providing security in the Diyala region of Iraq” said Brig. Gen. Dan Hickman, Commander of the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, which is a North Carolina National Guard Brigade made up of units from over 10 different states serving in Iraq.



**Members of ICDC graduate from the Train-The-Trainer course offered by U.S. Advisors and supported by the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)**



**Brig. Gen. Dan Hickman (right), Commander, 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team (BCT) presents a training certificate to a member of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC). (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)**

“These men will now go back and train their units and teach them the skills they learned here. This brings us closer to the safety and security level we are trying to provide to Iraq” continued Hickman. A key mandate and priority for the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT is to provide a safe and secure environment in this area of Iraq, as well as kill and destroy the insurgents and holdouts that oppose the peace process.

Since arriving in Iraq in early March, the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT has been conducting joint missions with the ICDC. Together they have operated traffic control checkpoints, cordon and search operations, and jointly executed several raids targeting insurgents. Results have been positive overall with a substantial amount of arrest of suspects with bomb making material, rocket launchers, illegal weapon cache, and recently constructed IED’s (improvised explosive device). “We work jointly with the ICDC and this training will make those efforts more effective” said Hickman.

In order to complete the training, the ICDC Soldiers were required to live and train at FOB Caldwell. Instruction was provided by U.S. advisors. Out of the 25 ICDC students, five represented each company in the battalion. Additionally, two Non Commission Officers from the 30<sup>th</sup> BCT will be embedded with each ICDC company to assist with the continuation of the training and leadership mentoring.

“These guys will go back and start training their units on the skills they learned from us. These guys were pretty good from the start” said one of the U.S. Advisors (names withheld for security).

“They were selected by their command for this special training. During our assessment we could see they had a good understanding on how to defend a fixed site, conduct cordon and search. Latter on we found out that they (ICDC) learned these skills from other Coalition Forces” elaborated one of the U.S. Advisors.

“We provided them training on basic patrolling techniques, room clearing and searching, and more cordon and search techniques. They are in need of some individual equipment issue items and need to focus on taking care of logistical needs of their Soldiers. Hopefully the embedded 30<sup>th</sup> BCT Soldiers can help with that situation” concluded a U.S. Advisor.

Just a year after the fall of the former regime, ICDC carrying their AK-47 rifles are becoming a common site in the new Iraq. These are the men tasked with manning many of the community checkpoints, guarding weapon storage sites, guiding Coalition Forces to IED locations, and sometimes making the ultimate sacrifice for a country that wants democracy and a better life for their children.

So far, there are over 50,000 Iraqi men serving in the ICDC. Iraqi citizens continue to make up the largest part of the Coalition Force in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Make no doubt about it, the ICDC are critical to the future of peace and security in Iraq.



# Developing Joint Cooperation

Written by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT, PAO

The Combat Patrol was only into its first hour in a thick palm grove flowing with water when 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 120<sup>th</sup> Infantry was tasked with a follow on mission to investigate a mortar attack near the Iraqi Police station in Kestannza. Insurgents during the previous night fired at least two mortars which impacted without causing any injuries or damaged in this small Iraqi town.

After arriving at FOB Roughrider in March, B Company started developing a working relationship with the Iraqi Police (IP) in Kestannza. According to the platoon leader, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Jason Pleasant “we are actively building a good rapport with the IP and it is starting to pay off. The IP is starting to come forward sharing information with us about specific attacks that have occurred”. FOB Roughrider was targeted with mortars just the previous night prior to the attack on the police station. Sharing of this information is the foundation that will lead to the security and safety Iraq desires.

“We have several police officers in our platoon that are helping provide some law enforcement training for the IP, such as how to conduct vehicle searches, and we also have been doing some joint patrols with the IP” said Pleasant. With the transfer of government to the Iraqi people approaching, Pleasant also said that “working with the IP is critical to the success, we got to interact daily and that’s why we have been conducting joint patrols and going to IP meetings”.

“Go out and hopefully find mortars or the tubes, we had a recon mission to find out how they are doing it” said Sgt. Jarrod Smith, also with 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon. Smith, is a Fire



Palm grove located in the Diyala section of Iraq searched by members of B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 120<sup>th</sup> Infantry. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, PAO)



Iraqi Police show Capt. Allen, Commander, B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 120<sup>th</sup> Infantry, a mortar round that did not explode during an attack the night before near the police station. B Company is actively working with the IP and conducting joint operations as the new Iraqi government prepares to take over after June 30. (photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT PAO)

Team Leader and was carrying the M203 Grenade Launcher as they zone searched the palm grove thicket. The overhead shade provided a degree of relief to the men loaded down with their full battle kit, however it became a challenge trying to navigate the flowing irrigation channels.

“Besides my family, what I miss back home is my job and the good people I meet networking in the banking business” said Smith. Smith is a Branch Manager for one of the large banks in the Southeast and he also was a Marine prior to joining the North Carolina Army National Guard. “Having the internet to use over at MWR helps us stay in touch with each other” commented Smith.

Smith really misses his family and speaks with a huge sense of pride when he talks about his wife being involved with the Family Readiness group back home. “My wife has good and bad days with me being deployed, but she goes to the meetings and tries to help the other wives as much as she can” added Smith.

“Our platoon is pretty tight, even before we got mobilized it was a tight group” said Smith when discussing the morale of 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon. “I always knew something like this could happen and after 9-11 it did not surprise me that we would be mobilized. Planned on doing 30 years in the military before deploying and still plan on doing 30 years” said Smith about his future military career plans.



Under a blanket of choking dust, members of B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 120<sup>th</sup> Infantry, roll out for a joint patrol with the Iraqi



Iraqi Police and Soldiers from 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 120<sup>th</sup> Infantry, examine a crater following a mortar attack the previous night. The intended target is thought to have been the adjacent Iraqi Police station in Khanzania. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT PAO)

# Diyala schools helped by 252nd Armor

Written by Capt. Matt Handley,  
th BCT Public Affairs Officer

**FOB Cobra, Iraq -** Forward Operating Base Cobra-Soldiers from 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon C Company 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion (BN) 252 Armor are putting the tools in the hands of young Iraqis, school tools that is. The soldiers discovered during recent patrols some needs of the local schools and decided to do something about it.

Visiting schools on April 24<sup>th</sup> they spoke with teachers and asked them to put together a wish list of the things they needed. They visited pre-kindergarten, primary, secondary all the way up through high school age kids. They returned a couple of days later to collect the lists and bring back some personnel office supplies and things they managed to collect around the base or had brought with them from the United States.

The Wish list consisted of materials to fix the buildings to include desks, air conditioning and windows, but also basics things like standard microscopes, physical education materials, filing cabinets, calculators, notebooks, pens, pencils, pencilsharpeners, and paper.

The need for school supplies touched off a bit of homegrown community activism back in North Carolina. Soldiers from the unit began contacting friends and family back home and asked to send supplies and ask schools back in the United States to sponsor a school here in Iraq. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Amos Oh and first platoon sergeant. Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Michael Hatley came up with idea along with Sgt. William Powell, and Staff Sgt. Cary Hathcock to purchased soccer balls for kids to play with at recess. According to Sgt. Powell, “It was just the right thing to do, those kids needed equipment and school supplies.”



**Spec. David Cortes of C Company 1st BN, 252nd Armor 30th Heavy Separate Brigade NC Army National Guard assists a local Iraqi police officer, man a check point in Northeastern Diyala Province in April of 2004. (Photo by Staff. Sgt Cary Hathcock)**

The enthusiasm the children have to learn and the dedication from the teachers struck a chord with Staff Sgt. Eric Robbins “As a parent of two little ones myself, I find it hard to believe that these kids go to school in conditions such as this. These kids are going to school, with bare wires, broken glass, and very little school supplies. It amazes me to see these kids wanting to learn, and the teachers willing to teach under these conditions. I found out today that most of these teachers are volunteers, and are not being paid anything.”

Conducting a variety of missions from raids, base security and convoys on roads where soldiers sometimes encounter improvised explosive devices is stressful, the chance interact with the youngest Iraqis has an impact with Staff Sgt. Cary L. Hathcock, “Since I’ve been in Iraq this was by far the best day I’ve had. Seeing the smiling giggling faces of those Iraqi children made my homesickness ease a little. It makes me think that if I make one child’s life a little better...maybe it’s worth being away from my wife and family.

As the infrastructure in Iraq continues to improve so will the availability of other supplies, for now the schools in North Eastern Diyala Province have the men of 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon Charlie Company and lot of people back in the US giving them hand.



**Members from C Company, 1st Battalion, 252nd Armor, are assigned to FOB Cobra, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh)**



**Cpl. Raymond Cooper (left to right) Staff Sgt. Cary Hathcock, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hatley of 1st Platoon Charlie Company 1st Battalion, 252 Armor 30th Heavy Separate Brigade NC Army National Guard, visit with a Pre-kindergarten class in North Eastern Iraq. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Cary Hathcock)**



# FOB Wyatt food service team sets high standards

Written by Cpl. Matthew P. Putney, 30th BCT PAO

**FOB Wyatt - Iraq.** “You have to love what you do” says Spc. LaMichel Dardon of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 252<sup>nd</sup> Armor Battalion, 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team. “If you love what you do and put a little extra effort into what you do, the payback is ten fold” continued Dardon. Dardon is in Iraq contributing to the fight by making sure the Soldiers get plenty of properly prepared meals at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Wyatt.



Spc. LaMichel Dardon of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 252<sup>nd</sup> Armor Battalion, 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team, is dedicated to making sure the Soldiers are getting the best food service that can be offered. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)

Dardon is a big man with a broad smile. Originally from Newark N. J. he now makes his home in Raligh N.C. With thirteen years as director of food service for the N.C. Department of Corrections, Dardon is fully aware what it takes to feed the large numbers of soldiers.

“Anyone can open a can of vegetables and throw them in a pot, or put a bag of precooked food into boiling water”. If you take a little time to open the food, season it properly and make sure it cooks evenly and completely, the positive feedback you get from the solders makes the extra effort well worth it. Like I said before, you have to love what you do” continued Dardon.

“Making sure the food is good and hot and the drinks are ice cold requires effort. When a solder gets a good hot meal after pulling guard duty, his combat readiness for his next shift is well maintained” replied Dardon.

Looking forward to the move from FOB Wyatt to FOB Cobra, Dardon will be reunited with the other mess specialists of the 252<sup>nd</sup> Armor. “The mess section is like a big chain and when myself and the other two cooks still at Wyatt arrive at Cobra, there will be no missing links. All in all the deployment is going well for me. This is my third deployment, and at the end of this enlistment in 2007 I may get out” said Dardon. I know what I signed up for, but I think it’s time to maybe get married and have a family” added Dardon.

With that big smile and positive attitude, if Spc. Dardon leaves the food service of the N.C. National Guard, he will definitely be missed.



There are many people involved across Iraq that contribute to getting the supplies pushed out to every FOB. What happens when it arrives is up to the Food Service Specialist, such as the team at FOB Wyatt. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Spc. Shalita Cassidy (left) and Sgt. Barry Oxendine, both with 252<sup>nd</sup> Armor, serve dinner to the Soldiers on duty at FOB Wyatt. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)

## MWR Comic relief at FOB Caldwell

Soldiers from Caldwell put together their own comic relief show for the troops. Excellent entertainment organized and conducted by junior enlisted Soldiers.



Spc. Emory Altman, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 30th BCT, steps out on the limb as Aka CSM Morgan.



Spc. Cooper, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 30th BCT, opened the show with singing talent that was unmatched.



Spc. Wade Joyne Headquarters Headquarters Company, 30th BCT, did his best standup as “Harry” the Cubs sports annoucer.



Spc Altman (left) rolled into one character after another with the help of the Comic Show MC, Spc. Melvin Kearney (right), also with Headquarter Headquarters Company, 30th BCT.



The MWR center was filled to capacity as the comics kept the laughter rolling.

# Task Force Mountaineers work to save Iraqi infant

Written by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO

**FOB Rough Rider , Iraq -** Fatemah Khalil Hassan just eight months old is struggling to stay alive in Mandali, Iraq, with a medical condition that threatens her existence called Cavernous Hemangioma.

Unfortunately, years of neglect by the former dictatorship, ethnic oppression because she is from a Kurdish tribe, present the unfair realities of life in Iraq that makes it impossible for Fatemah to receive the medical treatment she desperately needs.

“I saw her initially at the CMOC (Civil Military Operation Center) during our second week in Diyala at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Rough Rider and was able to determine that she suffers from Cavernous Hemangioma” said Ltc Col. Todd Fredricks, Battalion Surgeon, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 150<sup>th</sup> Armor, 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team (BCT). Fredrick’s is the senior medical officer and surgeon for the WVA Army National Guard Battalion deployed in Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“This is a relatively common birth defect which in most cases does not progress and as the child ages ‘involutes’ or regresses and disappears, however in Fatemah’s case it did not” stated Fredricks

According to Sgt. Luke Monck, 415<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion, 30<sup>th</sup> BCT, “the CMOC has accessed several civilians in the Diyala region that could benefit from medical assistance from the Coalition Force and they are working each of these through the proper channels”. Monck arrived in Iraq in February and has had the opportunity to see first hand how great the infrastructure needs are of Iraq.

Fredrick’s immediately started the ball rolling to pursue the possibility of sending Fatemah to the United States for treatment. “I made contact with colleagues at Children’s Hospital, Columbus, Ohio and implored them to consider caring for Fatemah at no cost. They accepted and when that occurred I requested through the Division and other Civil Affairs assets assistance in finding the lift for her and her mother to the USA” said Fredrick’s. “The issue became her airway, her growth and development because she cannot move her neck and ultimately her life in the end” elaborated Fredrick.

“For over six weeks I had been tracking her and awaiting word to send her to the United States when she developed a severe infection as a result of skin breakdown from the wound on her chest” continued Fredrick.

With the medical condition rapidly becoming more urgent, Fredrick was able under the Coalition Force guidelines to transport her to the 31<sup>st</sup> Combat Surgical Hospital (CSH) near Balad in Iraq. According to Fredrick, the 31<sup>st</sup> CSH staff was instrumental in stabilizing her and treating her infection.

Since the 31<sup>st</sup> CSH lacks the equipment and facilities to care for pediatric long term cases they arranged for Fatemah to be transferred to a hospital in Baghdad.

With a intense passion, Fredrick has been working the lines of communication within the Coalition Forces and U.S. State Department. “Right now several officials in Congress, as well as Army assets to include the 1st ID (Infantry Division), the 1st CAV (Calvary) elements here in Iraq and the CPA (Coalition Provisional Authority) have been asked to assist in helping her. Kurdish support groups in the Ohio region have been contacted and they will provide assistance for Fatemah’s family during her medical treatment.

Fatemah’s prospective surgeon in the USA is eager to get her there and the bottom line is that if she doesn’t get to the USA in weeks to a few months it is likely she will lose her life due to infection and or hemorrhage.

Getting to the USA means a cure and a new life. Staying here is terminal” said Fredrick. At the time of publishing permission had been granted by the official agencies and a flight to the United States was being coordinated.



**Staff Sgt. Howard Branham, A Company, 150th Armor, greets Iraqi children during a village assessment. Soldiers from the Coalition Forces are frequently trying to determine the needs of remote areas in order to prioritize assistance such as drilling a well. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT, PAO)**